

REMARKS

This Reply and Amendment is intended to be completely responsive to the non-final Office Action dated November 22, 2005. Claim 1-30 are pending and Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14-23 and 25-30 stand rejected. Claims 5-7, 13 and 24 are objected to. Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 16, and 27 have been amended. Claims 5 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits.

Allowable Subject Matter

In Section 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that Claims 5-7, 13 and 24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Independent Claim 1:

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent Claim 5, as indicated by the Examiner to be allowable. Dependent Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. The Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 (as amended) and dependent Claims 2-4 and 6-15 (as they depend from Claim 1) are in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-4 and 6-15.

Independent Claim 16:

Independent Claim 16 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent Claim 24, as indicated by the Examiner to be allowable. Dependent Claim 24 has been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. The Applicants submit that independent Claim 16 (as amended) and dependent Claims 17-23 and 25-26 (as they depend from Claim 16) are in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 16-23 and 25-26.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In Section 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 16-18, 22, 23, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hidding (3,042,067). As previously stated, the Applicants have amended independent Claim 16 to recite a combination of subject matter that the Applicants believe is patentable in view of the cited prior art.

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and reconsideration and allowance of Claims 16-18, 22, 23, 25 and 26.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In Section 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14, 15, 19-21 and 27-30 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hidding (3,042,067) in view of Wall (3,410,517), Forcier (636,971), Ray (4,257,446) and Edwards et al. (4,787,406).

Independent Claim 1:

As previously stated, the Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to recite a combination of subject matter that the Applicants believe is patentable in view of the cited prior art.

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14 and 15.

Independent Claim 27:

Independent Claim 27 has been amended to recite a combination of subject matter, comprising (in combination with other elements) a “clamp having an angled surface configured to engage the hose.” The Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art references do not disclose, teach or suggest (alone or in any proper combination) a combination of elements including a “clamp having an angled surface configured to engage the hose” as required by independent Claim 27 (as amended) and dependent Claims 28-30 (as they depend from Claim 27).

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and reconsideration and allowance of Claims 27-30.

* * *

The Applicants respectfully submit that each and every outstanding rejection has been overcome, and the present Application is in condition for allowance. The Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of pending Claims 1-4, 6-23 and 25-30.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present Application.

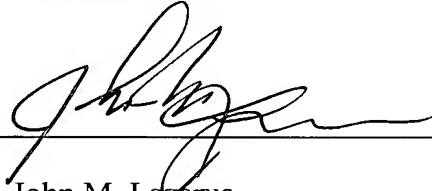
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to the Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, the Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extension fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

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